

U.S. HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGIES

PRESCRIPTION FOR BETTER HEALTH AROUND THE GLOBE

by Lisa Huot,

Office of Medical Devices, Trade Development

As an international leader in the development of innovative healthcare technologies — medical devices, pharmaceuticals and therapies the United States plays a key role in promoting improved healthcare around the world.

Like their global counterparts, healthcare professionals in the Middle East depend on the U.S. healthcare sector to provide the highest quality products and the most advanced diagnostic and treatment services in the world. Exports of U.S. medical, dental and ophthalmic devices to the Middle East stood at \$320 million in 2000 and grew by approximately 22 percent between 2000 and 2001. The development of private and public services and facilities in the Middle East are

expanding to serve increasing populations. As a result, the demand for high-quality healthcare is spurring development of new hospitals and medical centers. Countries of this region are dedicating resources to build new facilities and therefore, there are abundant opportunities for U.S. companies.

The specialty items available from U.S. medical device manufacturers range from imaging systems using X-rays, ultrasound, MRI and CT to cardiovascular products, such as pacemakers, coronary stents and catheters. Rapid diagnostic test kits and new drug treatments from U.S. companies are other tools that doctors use internationally to improve the quality of healthcare for their patients.

Innovation is not limited to devices, diagnostic products and pharmaceuticals.

U.S. healthcare institutions are constantly developing new procedures in critical care areas such as trauma treatment, burn care, pain management, diabetes monitoring, renal therapy, cancer treatment and blood banking.

These new products, procedures and treatments are disseminated through educational and training opportunities in the United States. Healthcare professionals from around the world, including many from the Middle East, receive medical training at U.S. universities and research institutions. Training opportunities include initial education, internships and residency programs, continuing education seminars and other specialized training provided at professional conferences. U.S. doctors and university professors often travel abroad as keynote speakers at major medical congresses and tradeshows,

U.S. DOMESTIC EXPORTS TO THE NEAREAST

LIST OF COMMODITIES	1998	1999	2000 IN 1,000 DOLLARS	JAN-OCT 2000	JAN-OCT 2001	PERCENT CHANGE YTD2000 - YTD2001
Electromedical Equipment	88,498	86,845	106,083	86,117	88,184	2.40%
Irradiation(XRay) Apparatus	40,319	44,812	41,009	30,951	76,346	146.70%
Surgical&Medical Instruments	108,427	93,370	82,869	71,360	80,109	12.30%
Surgical&Medical Supplies	54,734	48,861	57,176	47,955	49,820	3.90%
Dental	19,922	26,804	20,737	16,407	16,369	-0.20%
Ophthalmic Goods	12,580	9,557	12,183	9,624	8,444	-12.30%
Total U.S. Exports to the Near East, Medical	324,479	310,248	320,056	262,415	319,272	21.70%

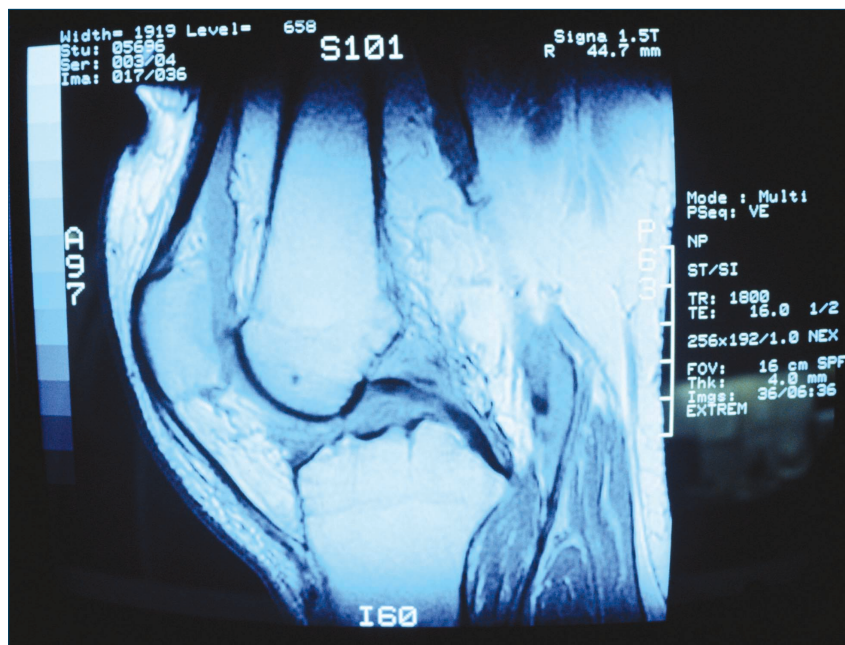
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

allowing local doctors exposure to the latest technologies and treatments.

Healthcare in the Middle East is also benefiting from the growing number of partnerships between U.S. hospitals and clinics and healthcare institutions abroad. Such partnerships enable hospitals in the Middle East to have direct links to state-of-the-art diagnostic tools and treatment planning. Although many patients still opt to travel to the United States to receive treatment, international partnerships help keep local doctors involved in the process, enabling them to provide better follow-up care when patients return home.

Working in conjunction with private companies and universities, several U.S. Government agencies including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) contribute to the vitality of the U.S. health care system. Founded in 1887, the National Institutes of Health is one of the foremost medical research centers in the world and is dedicated to searching for new ways to help prevent, detect, diagnose and treat disease. Composed of 27 separate Institutes and Centers, the NIH provides the backbone for medical research in the U.S. both in its own laboratories and through funding of private scientists and research institutions throughout the country and abroad. Many foreign research investigators are trained at the NIH, fostering international dissemination of new medical technologies.

The FDA takes a major role in promoting and protecting public health by ensuring the products that reach the healthcare market are safe and effective. The FDA also monitors products for continued safety after they are in use. Patients do not have to come to the United States, however, to benefit from the work of the FDA. Similar to the CE mark issued by European regulators, FDA approval is broadly recognized as



an assurance of product safety. Rather than duplicating the expensive and time-consuming regulatory activities of the FDA, many countries, including Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, readily accept FDA-approved devices, pharmaceuticals and treatments.

The CDC works with partners throughout the world to monitor health trends, detect and investigate health problems and implement prevention strategies. In today's global environment, diseases previously restricted to isolated areas of the globe have the potential to spread rapidly across borders. Early detection and action are, thus, more important than ever. The staff of the CDC plays a critical role in controlling such infectious diseases, traveling at a moment's notice to investigate outbreaks at home or abroad.

The U.S. Department of Commerce is confident that the already close relationship between the U. S. healthcare sector and the medical community in the Middle East will continue to be strengthened in the upcoming year.

We also invite businesses in the Middle East to contact the U.S. Department

of Commerce Foreign Commercial Service offices located in embassies and consulates throughout the region. Our staff is available to assist local medical-related businesses and healthcare institutions find suppliers and partners in the United States.

Again, the U.S. Department of Commerce looks forward to working closely with the Middle East to help provide our trading partners with the highest quality, most innovative and effective medical devices and pharmaceuticals in the world. ■

For more information regarding U.S. healthcare technology to the Middle East or elsewhere in the world, contact Lisa Huot of the Office of Medical and Dental Equipment. Tel: (202) 482-2796 or Email: Lisa_Huot@ita.doc.gov.